the work of Passport Offices and has resulted in falls in the output of Passport Offices, dissatisfaction among the passport seeking public, and projected the Passport Offices in a negative light to the general public. The unhelpful activities of the AIPEA is a major impediment to the public obtaining passports when the possession of passport is a basic right for all citizens of the country. The Government have nevertheless consistently taken a positive and constructive approach in its dealings with AIPEA as a result of which, the agitation in May 2003 was called off by the AIPEA on May 31, 2003.

Technocrats and IT experts for China

2009. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during the recent visit of the Prime Minister to China the issues relating to professional services, including technocrats and Information Technology professionals were discussed; and

(b) if so, what possibilities for such professionals and technologists and job-seekers from India were explored as a result of these talks indicating the estimated potential demand for such job-seekers in China and the availability of such manpower in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) and (b) During Prime Minister's visit to China in June 2003, there was no discussion with the Chinese side on specific issues relating to professional services. However, both sides agreed to cooperate in the field of Information Technology.

H-1B Visas to IT professionals

2010. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of H-1B visas issued to the Indian IT professional by the USA during the last five years, year-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that there is a drastic reduction in the issuance of H-1B visas to our IT professionals;

(c) if so, the reaction for such a drastic decline in issuing visas to Indians; and

(d) the steps taken to increase the issuance of H-1B visas to our IT professionals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (d) The requisite details are as follows:

Fiscal Years (October-September)	H-1B Visas issued to Indian Nationals
1997-1998	40,246
1998-1999	55,062
1999-2000	61,530
2000-2001	74,078
2001-2002	44,012
2002-2003 (October 1 to April 30)	21,401

There was an overall decline in the issue of H-1 B visas globally from U.S. fiscal year 2001-02 due to a slowdown in the U.S. Information Technology industry, which resulted in the reduced demand for I.T. professionals in the United States. Indian nationals have remained, however, the largest recipients of H-1B visas.

Terrorist training camps in PoK

†2011. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any list of the terrorist training camps, being operated in PoK, has been handed over the Bush administration by the Deputy Prime Minister during his recent visit to America; and

(b) if so, the reaction of America and Pakistan thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No. Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.